

Bishop's College School 1857
Report

My Lord,

I beg to submit for your consideration a brief review of Bishop's College School during the twelve months and the plan I propose for its augmentation and improvements. When I entered the school in Sept. 1856. I found in the school an average attendance of 36 pupils, boys, girls and Infants. The first class read and write fairly, but only three or four boys had advanced beyond the first four rules of Arithmetic. - The number of boys now in the school is 40. The girls and Infants are in a separate room under a mistress.

Of the whole school, the average daily attendance for the year is 56, the number admitted during the same period is 60, only eleven of those boys in the school last Easter now remain.

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Since August last the Boys have been in two divisions. In the first there are 20 Boys: of these 2 are studying Latin, 2 French, 2 Euclid, 6 Algebra, the others are not so far advanced. but all in this class are learning History - Geography - English grammar and Composition.

The second division numbers also 20 Boys, 7 of these are in fractions, and also learning Geography, History, and Grammar. the remainder are in the first four rules of Arithmetic.

During the last 6 months, I have been compelled to dismiss 18 Pupils from the 2nd Div. for non payment of fees according to Sec 15 Ord No 4 Ann 1855. I desire particularly to direct your Lordship's attention to this point, as I am informed, on good authority that in most schools Sec 2 and 15 of the above Ord are practically a dead letter. Some of those dismissed have gone to schools under second class masters. others have the streets. The excuse generally given is poverty, in most cases a false plea. But to the poor \$800 a year is a large sum, and if the masses are to be improved, every encouragement should be offered to the parents to send their children to school. As Alton Locke observes "there are differences of brain among the lower classes as well as among the upper. Some seem incapable of improvement. While others, having sharp intellects and active spirits crave for wholesome food. Which if not given will gorge them: - selves with poison."

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among the lower classes as well as among the upper. Some seem incapable of improvement. While others, having sharp intellects and active spirits crave for wholesome food. Which if not given will gorge them - = selves with poison."

Of the mental capacities of the black and coloured races I am not prepared to give an opinion. Professor Liebenmarn says "that is well marked and essential

difference exists between the brain of the negro, and
the European" whence he concludes that there is no
material difference in their intellectual faculties, and that
neither anatomy nor physiology can justify one placing
the African beneath the European in a moral or intellectual
point of view. Dr John Stow, in his book on the West
Indies considers them "quick to learn, not inferior in
aptitude to Europeans, and fond of learning". This
may be true; but it is also true (as a London paper says
of the Chinese) that in the present state of civilization,
intelligence, habits and customs of the Creole the
attempt to raise them from their degradation by the
same methods as are employed for educating the
youth of England. We may soon bid farewell to every
hope of success.

The accusation so often brought against the Creole for
mispending the beginning and end of the week applies
in full force to the children who attend our schools.
Not more than half the pupils are present on Monday
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of the week many absent themselves without excuse or
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has to contend is, that the English language is so
imperfectly understood that the simplest sentences
often convey no idea to the minds of the children.
Dr. Gory's description of the Barbadian Creoles is equally
applicable to the Jamaicans "The children in reading

are more exercised in the pronouncing of words, parrot-like,
than in the understanding of them; and to use the expression
of an old dame who courteously allowed me to question her
scholars, they are "nonplused" when asked the meaning of
all but the words in most familiar use. We must use every
endeavour to improve the "artem discendi" which as Dean
Hinsdale observes is worth all the information in the
world, and at the same time not neglect the "artem legendi".

To increase our numbers in Pop's (P.C.) School we must form
some plan to retain those children in the school who cannot
or will not pay their fees. Such cannot be admitted free into
the classes already formed, for the rules and regulations indis-
pensable to the discipline of the latter necessarily exclude
the former.

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the premises.

The plan that commends itself to my judgment is one that I hope may receive your Lordship's approbation.

1. That the existing classes remain as formerly.

2. That a free class be opened for the poor children recommended by Mr Webber. and into which might be drafted temporarily any children who did not bring their fees. (and this would be the most effectual method of ensuring payment by those able to do so).

The subjects of instruction to be Reading. Writing - and the first four rules of Arithmetic.

Requesting your Lordship's kind advice on this subject. I beg to subscribe myself

Your Lordship's faithful servant
James Mear Bagdon.